

# **EXHIBIT 39**



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**Department of Justice**

U.S. Attorney's Office

Northern District of Ohio



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Tuesday, June 11, 2013

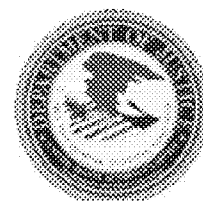
## Cleveland Man Sentenced To 12 Years In Prison For Leading Ring That Obtained Blank Prescriptions, Forged Them And Sold The Painkillers

A Cleveland man was sentenced to 12 years in prison for leading a ring that obtained blank prescription pads that were used to fraudulently obtain thousands of prescription painkiller pills, law enforcement officials announced today.

Louis Eppinger, 53, led a conspiracy that forged prescriptions for Oxycontin and Percocet pills, hired people to have them filled at pharmacies throughout the region, then sold the pills on the street, according to court documents. He previously pleaded guilty to conspiracy to possess with intent to distribute Oxycodone, health care fraud and aggravated identity theft.

"We have seen a huge increase in prescription drug abuse in Ohio, and this case demonstrates the lengths people will go to defraud and profit from pills," said Steven M. Dettelbach, United States Attorney for the Northern District of Ohio. "Instead of dealers shipping in drugs from South America, we now have people forging prescriptions."

"The abuse of illicitly obtained prescription drugs is reaching epidemic proportions, surpassing that of marijuana, cocaine and heroin combined," said Stephen Anthony,



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Special Agent in Charge of the Federal Bureau of Investigation's Cleveland office.  
"Dismantling illicit drug diversion networks such as the organization charged in this investigation will remain a top FBI priority."

Besides Eppinger, six other people have pleaded guilty to related crimes. They are: Patricia Arnold, age 61, of Cleveland; Anthony H. Perry, age 42, of East Cleveland; Elizabeth A. Davis, age 40, of East Cleveland; James Byrge, age 62, of Cleveland; Judy Burrows, age 25, of Cleveland, and Brittany N. Glass, age 22, of Cleveland.

Between 2011 and 2012, Eppinger, Arnold, Glass, Perry, Davis, Burrows and Byrge engaged in a conspiracy to possess with intent to distribute oxycodone, according to court documents.

Eppinger obtained blank prescription paper from an unknown source and DEA numbers of various physicians located in Northern Ohio for the purposes of passing fraudulent prescriptions for Oxycontin and/or Percocet, both of which contain oxycodone, according to court documents.

Eppinger provided the blank prescription paper to Arnold, who forged the prescriptions. Eppinger then provided the fraudulent prescriptions to Glass, Perry and Davis, who served as "walkers" and attempted to pass the prescriptions at pharmacies in Northeast Ohio, including several in Cleveland as well as locations in Shaker Heights, Willoughby and Garfield Heights, according to court documents.

Glass, Perry and Davis then gave the pills to Eppinger, who paid them for passing the fraudulent prescriptions. Eppinger then sold the pills or provided them on consignment to Burrows, Byrge and others, according to court documents.

Eppinger pleaded guilty to health care fraud for defrauding the Ohio Medicaid program by billing more \$21,098 for prescription painkillers to which he was not entitled, according to the indictment. He was ordered to repay that amount in restitution.

Eppinger also used the identities of two people in relation to a felony, resulting in the aggravated identity theft convictions.

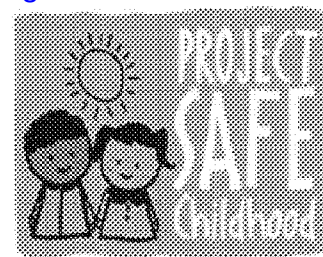
The case is being handled by Assistant United States Attorneys Michael L. Collyer and Michelle M. Baeppler following investigation by the FBI's Cleveland office, with assistance from the Cleveland Police Department, West Shore Enforcement Bureau, Ohio High Intensity Drug Trafficking Area and Ohio Attorney General's Office.

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**Component(s):**

USAO - Ohio, Northern

Updated March 12, 2015



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